COBBETT'S WEEKLY POLITICAL REGISTER.

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" THE defect of Representation is the national Disease; and, unless you apply a Remedy directly " to that Disease, you must inevitably take the Consequences, with which it is pregnant.——Without a " Parliamentary Reform the Nation will be plunged into new wars; without a Parliamentary Reform " you cannot be safe against bad Ministers, nor can even good Ministers be of use to you. *No honest* " *man* can, according to the present system, *continue* Minister."——MR. PITT'S SPEECH, in the House of Commons, 1782.

PARLIAMENTARY REFORM.

WHEN the reader has perused the motto, and observed the date, it will, doubtless, occur to him, that this same man, without a Reform in Parliament, became minister, and *continued to be minister for nearly twenty years.* The truth is, that, if there had been that Reform of Parliament, which he professed to wish for, and which profession, together with others of a similar tendency, gained him that popularity of which he made so mischievous an use; if that Reform of Parliament had taken place, he would very soon have ceased to be minister, or he would never have thought of those measures, by which, in one shape or another, the half of every man's estate has been taken from him, while the number of paupers has been doubled.——What we have recently seen; what has now been placed before us in so many shapes; what we have now seen so clearly proved; this must remove from every mind, any doubt that might exist, respecting the soundness, or unsoundness, of Mr. Pitt's doctrine, " that *no honest man* " can, according to the present system, " *continue minister.*"——Mr. Curwen's Bill, of which I have spoken in the two last Numbers, has passed: it is become *a law*, and it contains only *three lines and a half* of the bill, as originally proposed by Mr. Curwen. It was clearly shown, I think, in my Number of the 10th of June, that this bill, even in its best state; even as proposed by Mr. Curwen, would only throw the monopoly of seats into the hands of *the Treasury.* We need not wonder, therefore, that good Mr. Curwen had the gratification of seeing Mr. *Perceval* and Lord *Castlereagh* amongst his most zealous supporters. If the worthy Mr. *Reding* had been in the House, I dare say that Mr. Curwen would have been honoured with his support too.——But, the Opposition; I mean the *regular* Opposition, voted against the bill. They voted against the throwing of this monopoly into the hands of the Treasury; and, *why* did they so? *Because, they themselves had not the possession of the Treasury.* This was a very sufficient reason for them to oppose the monopoly; especially as they must have perceived, that the monopoly, if turned to good account by the present set, would deprive them of all chance of getting into the enjoyment of place and profit again for the remainder of many of their lives, if the system continued so long. This was *their* reason for opposing the bill, as new-modelled by the Tinman's Prosecutor.——During the last debate upon this bill, SIR FRANCIS BURDETT gave notice of his intention to move a Resolution upon the subject of *real* Reform; and, at the same time, to state distinctly what was the sort of Reform that he wished for.——The SPEECH, which he made upon the occasion of this Resolution, I am now about to insert, as made out from the notes of a very able short-hand writer; so that the public may look upon it as containing a perfectly correct statement of all that was said by Sir Francis Burdett upon this occasion. ——Here, then, we have *his* Plan of Reform. We have an exposition of the principles upon which that Plan is founded; and we have arguments undeniable as to its beneficial effects.——Any further than in observing, that this Plan, as to all its *material* parts, is precisely that which I wish for, and which every man not interested, either directly or indirectly, in public robbery, will, upon taking time to consider, heartily wish for; any further than this I shall not, at present, take up the time of the reader with any thing upon the nature or tendency of the Plan; but, there are some circumstances attending the bringing it forward, which it is proper to notice, and which will not fail to have due weight upon the mind of the public.——It was on Monday, the 12th instant, that, in speaking upon Mr. Curwen's bill, Sir Francis Burdett gave notice of his intended motion,

which notice he introduced thus: He said "that the honourable Mover, who "originally introduced the Bill, could, in "its present state, scarcely acknowledge "it as his measure. His, indeed, must "be a mobility of political feeling, if, so "metamorphosed, he could recognise it "as his own, melted down as it had been "so completely, in the crucible of the "Chancellor of the Exchequer. By whom "was it supported? What influence, un-"der those changes, which some would "affect to call improvements, now recom-"mended it to the sanction of the House? "Strange to tell, this measure of *Reform*, "this remedy for existing evils, this, which "in its operation was to have the power-"ful effect of preventing their recurrence, "was now *recommended, fostered*, and *im-"proved by the very persons who either had "committed, were accused of committing, or "by their votes in that House, had sanc-"tioned the very criminal transactions and "offences against the principles of the Consti-"tution and the independence of Parliament, "which this very Bill, so supported, now "went to remedy and redress.* Could the "House forget what was the nature of the "plea, when such transactions were offer-"ed to be proved at its bar?—when the "very *author of this Bill*, for so changed, so "perverted was it from its original import, "that he could not call it any longer the "measure of the honourable gentleman be-"hind him (Mr. Curwen), *had himself "been accused of conniving at such an offence* "—when his noble colleague (lord Castle-"reagh) near him had from his own lips "been self-convicted—when indeed, from "every side of the house justification and "not corrective, was the tenor of individual "sentiment and of general discussion. "And in what did that justification con-"sist? It was only to be found in the *ex-"tensiveness of this great constitutional offence.* "Now, it did happen, that in our Courts "of *criminal jurisprudence*, where the *ig-"norant* and the *poor* and the *wretched* had "to answer for *their* misdeeds, that those "very crown lawyers who here defended "that crime upon its extensiveness and "its frequency, converted that very fre-"quency and extensiveness, in the former "case, into an aggravation of the crime, "and into an additional argument for the "*propriety of conviction and the necessity of a "severe punishment.* Had the house, when "such offences were directly charged "against individuals, heard any such con-"stitutional doctrine from those whose si-"tuations bound them to deliver it? No, "no. Neither direct accusation, neither "acknowledged frequency and admitted "extensiveness, had produced any effect, "until the evil itself, and the source from "whence it emanated, became too evident "to be longer concealed from the people "or protected by those interested. And "what, after all, was the remedy?—A "measure in its origin far from being ef-"fectual, but, under its present modifica-"tions, only what he must repeat, *an in-"demnity for past offences and a security for "future corruptions.*"——After this he gave the notice before-mentioned, observing, that it would be scandalous, to the last de-gree, for the house to separate without giving some pledge to the country, that they would seriously take the ques-tion of Reform into their consideration as soon as they met again.——His notice was for the *Wednesday*, and, it so *happened*, that, though there was much business to press forward, there were not members enough present to make what is called *a House*, so that the motion could not be made. If the *notice* had been *renewed*, the like might have happened again; and thus, when the last day of the session came, the motion and the speech *might have been prevented* by a rap at the door by the Black Rod. This the mover prevented by taking care to attend every day, and the first moment he caught the House formed for business, rising and making his speech and motion.—When men are conscious of their own inferiority of talents, or of the badness of their cause, they naturally keep aloof: they decline, they shun, they flee from discussion. When this Speech of Sir Francis Burdett came to be made, and when the public saw what Mr. Perceval had to say in answer, the cause of there being *no House* to hear the motion was evident enough. It was impossible to let the thing go off; it was impossible to ne-gative such a motion without saying some-thing; very little could be said, and, therefore, it was best *not to make a House*, and, if possible, not to let the people hear what Sir Francis Burdett had to propose as a Plan for Parliamentary Reform.—This, however, has not succeeded. We have now the principal parts of that Plan before us; and, if we approve of it, the way for us to shew that approbation, is, by peti-tioning the King to recommend the mea-sure to the parliament.—In my next, it is my intention to consider this plan of the Honourable Baronet in *detail*, and to see how it would *act*, if put into movement. The principles upon which the Plan is

founded are admirably displayed in the Speech, and they cannot be too attentively considered; but, it will be useful for us to see how the plan itself will *operate;* how it will *work;* how it will be carried into execution.—Having made these introductory observations, I shall now insert the Speech, subjoining to it an account of the numbers upon the division, and a list of the minority.—This appears to me to be the first great direct step towards the demolition of that system of corruption, which has so long been gnawing at the heart of the country, and which, thanks chiefly to Mr. Wardle, has been of late, so well exposed; and, I trust, that, at no great distance of time, we shall have to trace a Reform from this first step to the completion.

SPEECH
OF
SIR F. BURDETT, BART.
IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, JUNE 15, 1809,
ON A
REFORM OF THAT HOUSE.

Sir;

I rise to offer to the attention of the house a Plan of Reform, not for its immediate adoption, but for its future consideration; to state my opinion to the house, and the public, upon this subject, and to propose to the house to come to a Resolution (according to frequent custom at the close of a session), the object of which is, to hold out an assurance to the country, that the house will, at an early period in the next session, take into its consideration the necessity of a Reform in the State of the Representation.

This course I am urged, amongst other reasons, to adopt, in order to get rid of the misrepresentation (unintentional I am willing to believe) which has been so long, and so actively propagated, with regard to my views and opinions on this momentous point: the mischievous tendency of which misrepresentations, as affecting myself personally, would alone have very little influence upon my mind; but it has much, combined with the public interest. As involved in this most essential question, I therefore feel it a duty to myself and the public to relieve this subject from all misrepresentation, ambiguity, and misconception: and in now proposing for discussion, but not for immediate adoption, the outline of a specific Plan, I am answering those repeated calls which have been made upon me in this house, to state to this house, and to the public, definitely and precisely, what my views are upon the subject (perpetually agitated) of Parliamentary Reform, that henceforward it may be fully and clearly understood, how far I do really mean to go, and at what point I mean to stop.

This is a subject which has long engaged my most anxious attention; and though I very early stated my opinion respecting it, that opinion was not thoughtlessly formed, or rashly hazarded; but after the most diligent inquiry, and minute investigation. If I did not then offer it to the public attention without due reflection, still less did it originate in those views and mischievous motives, to which it has been falsely ascribed—a desire to excite discontent, and to agitate the public mind by exaggerated statements of undefined grievances, beyond the reach of practical constitutional redress. I am ready to admit, if such were the case, that my conduct would be as culpable as those who most misrepresent it, would wish it to be considered; and I am willing to confess, that to excite discontent in the public mind by fixing its eye upon necessary and unavoidable evils, beyond the power of remedy, would be as exceptionble and dishonest a proceeding, as to mislead them from their true remedy, and obstinately to withhold that easy redress which the Constitution so clearly points out, and so amply affords.

In this case, I shall cautiously abstain from any exaggeration of public grievance, or any expression calculated to excite in any gentleman, or set of gentlemen, the slightest irritation, or asperity of feeling; it being my wish, that the question should stand on its own merits, that it should be coolly and candidly considered, and that it should be the subject, not of angry contention, but of fair discussion. At the same time, there are some doctrines and opinions which have been recently promulgated in this house, of so misleading and mischievous a tendency, that I cannot allow myself to pass them over altogether without some animadversion.

The course I have prescribed for myself is to state the Evils arising out of the defective state of the Representation, and then to point out the Remedy, which is simple, and perfectly practicable, not only consistent with the habits and interests of the people, and in unison with the laws and constitution of the country, but is (as I think I can shew) *the Constitution itself:*

——Let others deal in whimsical speculations, in undefined mysterious notions of a Constitution, which eludes the grasp, and soars above the conception of ordinary minds, let them amuse themselves with intricate theories and fine-spun metaphysics, whilst I shall hold fast by that plain and substantial Constitution, adapted to the contemplation of common understandings, *to be found in the Statute Book, and recognized by the Common Law of the Land.*—If it can be shown that the principles on which I proceed are erroneous, unconstitutional, and inconsistent with the ancient, fundamental laws of England, I shall stand corrected, and willingly abandon my proposition; but if, on the contrary, I shall be able to demonstrate, that the present system is the creature of innovation, and a departure from the old, established, *unrepealed* laws of the country, and that a recurrence to the practice of these laws, is an easy and adequate remedy for the evil, though I may not indulge a hope of the concurrence of this house, yet I may hope for the approbation of the public, and, at all events, I shall enjoy the satisfaction of knowing that I have performed an essential duty, both to the people and myself, in bringing forward the present inquiry.

Before I proceed to the consideration of the subject more immediately before the house, I think proper to make some remarks upon those very extraordinary doctrines to which I have before alluded.—— It has been asserted, that Corruption is not only a part of our Constitution—that it was not only necessary and to be tolerated, but (as it should seem) that the Constitution was to be tolerated for the sake of the Corruption. We have heard it seriously alledged, that without the auxiliary of Corruption in this house the Constitution would be insecure, that the Government could not be carried on. It has been described as "growing with our growth, and "strengthening with our strength:" it had been more consolatory to have been informed, that it decayed with our decay and diminished with our decrease. One can hardly conceive a more unhappy quotation for the purposes of those who have made the allusion. What is it the poet speaks of, when he says it

"Grows with our growth, and strengthens with our strength?"

It is a state of disease necessarily terminating in final dissolution.

"The young *disease*, which must subdue at length,
"Grows with our growth, and strengthens with our strength."

It applies strongly, indeed, in favour of those who call for some Remedy to arrest the progress of destruction, for some stimulus to re-invigorate the Constitution and save it from decay, by extirpating the vile and loathsome canker of Corruption, which preying upon the vitals, palsies the energies, and consumes the substance, of the country.——The various and contradictory arguments by which this Corruption has been attempted to be defended challenge particular observation: at one time it has been alledged to be so trifling as to be unworthy of our notice, it is represented *then* as "mere cheese-parings and candle-"ends." It may, however, be worth remarking (by the bye) an old English proverb to be found in Ray's Collection, which says "all the King's cheese goes in parings," and if a cheese is cut straight through the middle it is all parings; whilst at other time these cheese-parings assume a shape so formidable as to render any attempt to diminish them fruitless and unavailing; so that, inconsistent in argument, consistent in principle, the defenders of Corruption, as it suits their purpose, either represent it as a pigmy beneath notice, or a giant not to be contended with: from which alternate modes of defence we are forced to infer, that in the minds of some gentlemen, Corruption, be it small or be it great, is not only not to be checked or controuled, but to be fostered and encouraged. We are to hug our disease, and doat on dissolution: But so very opposite is my idea upon this subject, that I say, be Corruption small or great, let it assume what form or shape it may, it is an intolerable evil; in the first stage of it I would have said, "*Principiis obsta:*" at our high tide of it I will exclaim, "*Ne plus ultra,*" that delay is death. The question now is, How the career of this Destroyer is to be arrested? In my opinion, there is no way of doing this with effect, but *a Reform of this House.*

Another doctrine equally mischievous as the former, which it was triumphantly said no human creature could contradict, was that of all men acting from *Mixed Motives.* This may be a convenient doctrine for public men, but, I trust, will appear as unfounded and indefensible as the arguments just alluded to in support of Corruption, either on account of its supposed insignificance or real magnitude: its object and bearing is, in fact, to cut up all morality by the very roots; there could be no rational ground for confidence or esteem, were such a doctrine once admitted; if

all men are supposed to act from *Mixed Motives*, how can any man's character be known? How ascertain the proportion (upon which all depends) of good and bad in the mixture? How discover from what motive any action springs, or whether to be attributed to it praise or censure?—From the confidence and boldness with which this extraordinary doctrine has been advanced, it may seem hazardous to risk a refutation of it; I shall nevertheless attempt to shew that the reverse is the fact, and that, so far from men acting generally from mixed motives, they never act so at all; and however metaphysical may be the notions of some gentlemen, I defy them, with all their refinement and subtlety, to produce a mixture of motives in their own minds. Motives are as impossible to mix as parallel lines to meet. Many motives, it is true, may concur to impel a man to one act, as many roads may lead to one town; many rivers direct their courses to one sea, but they are not on that account mixed. Avarice, ambition, love of country, may conduce to one end; though one of these passions may predominate, the motives remain unmixed; but when put in opposition one to the other, the impossibility of mixing them becomes apparent, the strongest motive overcomes the rest.——The position is quite unphilosophical, and the idea of mixed motives altogether absurd. Surely, no one will call in question the doctrine of a ruling passion, strong even in death, to which we see and daily hear of men offering themselves up willing victims. As our senses, though they may be affected all together, are still distinct, in like manner our minds, though they may be affected at one and the same time by more motives than one, yet do they remain unmixed. But there may be a great convenience in adopting this doctrine of Mixed Motives, similar to that experienced some time since in keeping *mixed accounts*; such *mixture* serving to create confusion and avert detection. I defy any man, however, to shew that such a doctrine is reconcileable either with morality or logic.

There is one other doctrine, which cannot be passed over without animadversion, equally dangerous, in my mind, with the foregoing ones. It has been held, that whilst *the forms* of the Constitution remained, there was something so excellent in the *mere forms*, that not only was the possession of them of the highest value, but a hope was thereby justified of an amelioration of the state of the country. My opinion is directly the reverse of this, in which I am supported by the authority of the greatest historians and writers upon political subjects, who have uniformly laid it down, that of all tyrannies a legislative tyranny exercised *under the forms* of a free government, is the most tremendous and fatal; because without hope of remedy.

Tacitus, whose penetration and ability will not be disputed, depicting the melancholy condition of the Roman Empire, under that relentless tyrant Tiberius, describes it as most deplorable, not only on account of flagitious acts proceeding from hypocrisy and despotism united, but still more so on account of its hopeless condition, whilst under the mask of freedom, uncontroulable power was exercised, because that cruel tyranny was carried on *under the forms of the ancient constitution*. There was still *a Senate debating*, Consuls appointed, and tribunes of the people, *and all the Forms* of the ancient republic studiously preserved; and by how much the more those forms served as a cloke to hide the odious features of despotic power, by so much the more was it terrible, irresistible, and severe: "*Quantoque majore*," says Tacitus, "*libertatis imaginæ tegebantur, tanto* "*irruptura ad infentius servitium;*" therefore, I am not at all disposed to be satisfied with *the forms*, when *the spirit and essence* of the Constitution have fled.——We have been reminded of the old fable of the Stag and the Horse, introduced with the view, as it should seem, of warning the people against throwing themselves into the arms of one power, in order to avoid falling into those of another. The application of this fable could not be mistaken; it meant, that the People should not seek to ally themselves with the Crown, in order to rid themselves of the grievance of a corrupt House of Commons. To that warning I cannot lend an ear, having no dread of the Prerogative of the Crown; which I know forms part of the law of the land, and is material and necessary to maintain the Constitution. *My only apprehension is, from the usurpation of the legitimate Prerogative, by the Borough Monger Faction, and the consequent abuse of it by the agents of that Faction; untruly stiling themselves Ministers of the King, Servants of the Crown, through the medium of this House falsely denominating itself the Representative of the People.*——My desire, therefore, is to erect a barrier against such usurpation and abuse, by a restoration of the fair balance of the Constitution, by giving to each branch its lawful right: thus, providing at once for the defence of the Prerogative of

the Crown, and the protection of the undoubted unalienable Rights of the People: and I think there is no difficulty in shewing that they go well together, that one is in trust for the protection of the other, and that in consequence of their having being separated, contrary to the principles and in violation of the ancient usage of our Constitution, those abuses of which the people now complain first crept in, and being once admitted have made such rapid and tremendous strides towards our destruction; in the midst of which, *all the specious forms* of our Constitution have been studiously observed ——Thus, as in Rome, *the observance of forms*, instead of being valuable, as securing any benefit, or justifying any hope, serves only to aggravate the mischief, by adding hypocrisy to despotism, and to embitter the sufferings by deluding and mocking the people.——I must not be misunderstood—no person is more anxious than myself, for the retention and maintenance of those forms; my wish is, to have *the substance also*, that the people may not be any longer duped by appearances which serve only *to perpetuate the cheat.*

A charge has been made by the abettors of Corruption against those who wish for Reform, as *innovators* and subverters of the Constitution of the country, whereas, the sole object of us Reformers is, *to rescue the country from the effects of the innovation that has been introduced.* Those who speak so much of innovation seem to forget what the great Lord Bacon has said, that "of "all innovators time is the greatest." Will you, then, while all things are changing around you, determine to stand still? Will you still cling to a Rotten-borough System, the creature of innovation, nursed by usurpation, and matured by corruption? for such shall I shew it to be. Is it reasonable that sovereignty should be attached to particular spots and places, and to convert into *Private Property*, that which the Constitution has declared to be *a Public Trust*--to permit an usurped local sovereignty, independent of the King, independent of the People, and destructive to both.—The Prerogative of the Crown, had it been maintained free from encroachments, would never have suffered this anomaly, this ill-shaped monster, this Rotten-borough System, at once formidable and contemptible, to have undermined the Constitution. During the whole course of our history, from the time of William the Conqueror to that of William the Third, down to which the legitimate prerogative of the crown was exercised by the King, no such absurdity was conceived as a Rotten-borough Parliament.—That part of the Prerogative to issue Writs to such places as were judged from time to time, according to their importance, most fit to send proper and discreet persons to the Common Council of the nation, was a most wise and salutary provision in the code of the Constitution, and well calculated to prevent the occurrence of those evils of which, so loudly and with so great reason, we at this day complain.—Can we suppose that any King in the possession of his just Prerogative, would have thought of addressing a Writ, when he was exercising that great function of his prerogative, the assembling the Great Council of the nation, to Rotten-boroughs? or that it would have been endured if he had? The King's writs run, "*ad Proceres et Dominos et Communes Reg-*"*ni*," under which description no Rotten-borough could be included. Can it be imagined that St. Mawes, the posts of Gatton, or the stones of Midhurst, would have been required to send wise and discreet burgesses to assist with their advice in the Great Council of the Nation? James the First, on his accession to the throne, upon summoning the parliament, wisely exercised this prerogative by issuing a Proclamation, forbidding the sending writs to decayed boroughs*; nor was it till the prerogatives of the Crown were encroached upon at the era of the Revolution, when the seeds of this Rotten-borough System, which have since grown so luxuriantly, and have produced such poisonous effects, the baneful influence of which we now so sensibly feel, were with woeful prodigality first scattered over the land, that the Country was deprived of that corrective wisely lodged in the hands of the Crown by the Constitution, for its preservation against the unavoidable innovations of time, whilst the people, artfully led to ascribe all the evils of the two former reigns to Prerogative alone, willingly acquiesced in its retrenchment—in which they made a fatal mistake, a mistake originating in the idea that they extended their own Liber-

* "Next, that all the Sheriffs be charged "that they do not direct any Precept for "electing and returning of any Burgesses "to or for any ancient Borough within "their Counties, being so utterly ruined "and decayed, that there are not sufficient "resyantes to make such choice, and of "whom lawful election may be made." See Cobbett's Parliamentary History, vol. i. p. 969.

ties in proportion as they curtailed the Prerogative of the Crown—an ingredient in the Constitution as essential to its existence, as is an uncorrupt, full and fair Representation of the People in this House.

Had the constitutional power of the Crown remained undiminished, this House would not now be in its present contaminated state, the just and great prerogative of the Crown would have been exercised beneficially, and given the King his proper weight in the administration of national affairs, whilst the People would have a shield—and a shield and not a sword is all the people expect, in an uncorrupted and fairly elected House of Commons.—This I take to be the Constitution of England—but out of this usurpation upon the crown, conspiring with the innovations of time, a third power has arisen, that of the *Borough-mongers*—the creature of innovation, the worm of corruption, always unknown to our laws, now become greater than the laws, equally hostile to King and People, misrepresenting one to the other, filling the mind of one with jealousy, the ears of the other with alarm, which, by perpetuating discord, reigns sole arbiter of the strife, and establishes its ignominious dominion over both.—My first object, therefore, is, *to reunite the King and the People, by the constitutional bond of Allegiance on the one hand, and Protection on the other.*

"The wisdom of our laws," says Lord Coke, "is most apparent in this, that any "departure from their established princi- "ples, although at the time wearing the "specious appearance of advantage, never "fails to bring along with it, such a train "of unforeseen inconveniences, as to de- "monstrate their excellence and the ne- "cessity of again having recurrence to "them." And, how strikingly that observation is exemplified in the consequences which have followed the departure from the principles of the Constitution, which has led to the establishment of this grievous Borough-monger System: the inconsistency of which with the principles of our laws and institutions, so glaring in the terms of the Writs of Elections, as in every other point of view, no one can dispute. The simple principle upon which, as upon a pivot, the whole of this subject of Representation turns, is this; that the free subjects of this kingdom have a Right of Property in their own goods; in other words, that the People of England cannot be legally and constitutionally taxed without their own consent.—I suppose this will not be denied; and yet it is equally indisputable, that this principle is absolutely annihilated by the present frame of the Representation of this House, to which a Petition on your table offers to prove, that one hundred and fifty-seven individuals have the power of returning a majority; so that the whole property of the free subjects of this kingdom is, in violation of this first and plain principle, at the disposal of 157 Borough-mongers, or in other words, 157 Borough-mongers have usurped, and hold as private property, the sovereignty of England—and can we be satisfied with this miserable, pitiful substitution for the King and Constitution?—Can the People remain contented with the legislation of such a power?—Impossible. Believe me, Sir, the discontent that exists in this country, arises principally from the certain knowledge the People now have of the corrupt state of this House, and their exclusion from that share in the Constitution to which they are by law intitled, that they are not fairly, nor indeed at all represented,—in fact, that the interests of this House are not identified with, but opposite to theirs—remove this defect, repair this great injury, and the advantages will be immediate and important; the People will then believe, that all that is practicable for their benefit will be done, and from that conviction they will naturally be reconciled to those evils, which they would see a disposition to alleviate, and a mutual interest to redress.

Every part of the Empire will feel the benefit of the Reform; but no where will the great advantages of the measure be likely to prove more salutary than in that most interesting part of the empire—IRELAND. From the deep interest I take in the concerns of that country, from my idea of its mighty importance, have I reserved the mention of it till last; though the consideration of the manner in which I could devote my best service to it has never been out of my mind, never till now did it mature any practicable plan, calculated to give universal satisfaction to that generous, that insulted people, with perfect security to the state. If Reform is necessary here, it applies much more forcibly there; indeed, the peculiar situation of that country makes it a measure of imperious necessity.——On the subject of Ireland I can hardly speak, from the fear of trespassing on the rule I had laid down for my conduct upon this occasion. I dare not venture to trust myself with the grievances of Ireland. It is a subject I cannot discuss without a more considera-

ble degree of warmth, than is consistent with that dispassionate line of conduct I am upon this occasion particularly anxious to maintain. My desire is to have Ireland united with this country upon terms, however, very different from those which at present exist. I should wish to see there a perfect equality of advantage, and no exclusions. Of the present Union, so called, I shall speak but little at this time: suffice it to say, that it was a measure contrary to the wishes, repugnant to the interest, revolting to the feelings of that nation; and effected by means the most flagitious, if the most unblushing corruption on the part of the agents, and the breach of every solemn assurance to the great body of that people, not only implied but expressed by the government of that country, deserve the appellation. Instead of that parchment Union, I shall propose a real Union of heart and affection, founded on the broad basis of the Constitution, of equal rights, and reciprocal interests.—— Away with that crooked policy, that narrow-minded bigotry of legislation, that intolerable intolerance, which keeps alive perpetual heart-burnings, hatred, and revenge. I wish not to dwell upon this system; it is high time to put an end to it.—Is it to be any longer endured, that four millions of Irishmen should be aliens and outlaws in their native land? Is it safe to have four millions of the people thrust out of the pale of the Constitution? Is it consistent with reason, with common sense, putting justice out of the question, any longer to tolerate such a system? By the adoption of Reform, the government will have the fairest opportunity of removing the principal grounds of dissatisfaction in Ireland; now will be the time to do every thing without yielding any thing, to legislate upon enlarged principles, knowing nothing of particular parties, sects, or factions; keeping alive no distinctions of Catholic, Protestant, and Presbyterian, Tory, Whig, or Jacobin; alarming no prejudice, insulting no party, they may now include the whole within one bond of union of the Constitution, embracing and ensuring the safety and tranquillity of the empire at large.—We shall then, and not till then, have an United Kingdom—one King—one People. ——We shall by this recurrence to the Constitution, not only seat the Chief Magistrate upon his throne, and fix the Crown upon his head, but we shall place within [illegible] sceptre and legitimate power [illegible] of those 157 Bo- [illegible] have TRAITEROUSLY usurped all but the pageantry and outward shew and forms of Royalty.

What is the condition of the King under this Faction? Instead of taking advantage of the elevation of his situation, where the Constitution had placed him, as the eye of the nation, for the purpose of taking extensive views for the advantage of the national interests, beyond the contracted horizon of ordinary men, his whole time is employed, his whole skill directed, not towards the duties of his high office, but in trying to keep his balance, in endeavouring to conciliate the support of such and such a Borough-monger, in order to obtain his permission to allow the Government to go on.—In truth, the Borough Faction have such power, that he is more like a Rope Dancer, than a King; as they make it necessary for him to be perpetually upon the alert to balance himself on his slippery elevation, whilst the utmost he can do is to keep his place. Such is the state to which he is reduced under the influence of this ignominious system, instead of having his throne fixed on the rock of the Constitution, and bound to the hearts of a whole people. This is not the situation in which the Laws and Constitution have placed the King, nor that which his dignity requires, and the best interests of the people, demand.

The System, of which I have now given but a short sketch, which was introduced at the Revolution, and grew out of the encroachments on the Prerogative of the King, aided by the innovations of time, has already cost this nation nearly Eight Hundred Millions of Debt; for though it has been wittily said, that one half of this enormous Debt has been incurred in resisting the perfidy and restless ambition of the house of Bourbon, the other half in striving to replace it on the throne of France, this is not true; the fact is, the whole has been incurred in the prosecution of the scheme of corrupting this House.

This question is so completely decided by Magna Charta, "which," as Lord Coke says, "is such a fellow that he will "bear no equal," so strongly fortified by all our constitutional laws, that no inferior authority can be required; but, were I so disposed, I could cite a host of legal and constitutional Writers; and all those members of this house, who have from time to time expressed their sentiments in support of this measure, whose arguments were never confuted, and whose talents, though successful on all other occasions, were un-

availing when exerted in support of Reform. This problem, however, is easily solved, when we consider that the appeal is made to the Borough-mongers themselves, whose interest is opposite to the measure. Their interest is different from that of the people.

Having taken the Laws and the Constitution for my guide, in preparing the measure I shall have to propose, I at the same time examined attentively all those Plans for carrying the same principle into execution, which have at different times been proposed; and having avoided all those intricacies which I considered as so many impediments in the way, have reduced it to that plain and simple form, the express image of the Constitution itself.—My Plan consists in a very few, and very simple, regulations; and as the Disease we now labour under has been caused by the disunion of Property and Political Right, which reason, and the Constitution, say should never be separated, the Remedy I shall propose will consist in re-uniting them again.

For this purpose I shall propose:—

That Freeholders, Householders, and others, subject to direct Taxation in support of the Poor, the Church, and the State, be required to elect Members to serve in Parliament.

That each County be subdivided according to its taxed male Population, and each subdivision required to elect one Representative.

That the Votes be taken in each Parish by the Parish Officers; and all the Elections finished in one and the same day.

That the Parish Officers make the Returns to the Sheriff's Court to be held for that purpose at stated periods.

And, That Parliaments be brought back to a Constitutional Duration.

The simplicity of this Plan appears from its being the true Constitution of England, which has already prepared all the means ready to our hands of carrying it into immediate effect; and I make no hesitation in delivering it as my well-digested opinion, that under the operation of this Reform, it would be attended with much less difficulty to return a whole Parliament, than to settle a dispute at a vestry about a parish pauper. By the adoption of this Plan of Reform, those disgraceful practices, which now attend even County Elections, would be put a stop to. No bribery, perjury, drunkenness, nor riot; no "Wealthy Brewer," as was humourously described, who, disappointed of a job, takes, in consequence, "the inde-"pendent line, and bawls out against "Corruption:" no opportunity would remain for such mock Patriotism: — no leading Attornies galloping about the country, lying, cheating, and stirring up the worst passions amongst the worst people:—no ill blood engendered between friends and relations—setting families at variance, and making each county a perpetual depository of election feuds and quarrels:—No Demagogueing.—If I *am* a Demagogue, I am as complete a *felo de se* as can well be imagined—this puts an end to the occupation:—There would be an end to all odious and fanciful distinctions of persons and property—all would be simple and uniform; their weight and influence proportioned to their *intrinsic* value—no qualifications nor disqualifications —no inviduous exclusions by reason of any office, from the highest to the lowest, either in the Elector or the Elected—no variable, fantastical, litigious rights of voting — no possibility of false votes—no treating—no carrying out voters—no charges of any kind—no expense, legal or illegal—no contested elections.—The people would have a choice without a contest, instead of a contest without a choice;—no sham remedies worse than the disease pretended to be cured—No Grenville Act; here I speak feelingly; I have undergone this *remedy*.—It is the remedy of a toad under a harrow.—"*Haud ignara malis,* "*miseris succurrere disco.*" That Act, which has been so highly extolled, was itself called a *reform*;—as all the acts aggravating the mischief, which have been substituted for the Constitution, are called in this House.

Under the operation of that Act, I have suffered a greater pecuniary penalty than any which the law would have inflicted for any crime I could have committed; this *remedy* is a luxury, a man must be very rich, indeed, to indulge himself in. I could not afford it a second time, and preferred abandoning my seat after having been returned, to undergoing another operation of the Grenville Act. One great object I have in view is to relieve other Gentlemen from the like benefits, by preventing the necessity of having recourse to *such remedies* in future—by getting rid of all disputes, and contested elections: this good consequence will result from the adoption of this Plan, besides preventing endless litigation, ruinous expense, per-

jury, ill blood, and periodical uproar and confusion, this House will be saved one-third of its time in Election Committees; and the Statute Book will be relieved from the shameful burden of one hundred and thirteen confused and intricate laws, all pitiful substitutes for the Constitution.

There may be some Gentlemen who think we should not get a better assembly within this House by this or any other Plan of Reform.—Even supposing, but by no means admitting, such should unaccountably be the case, the positive evils we should get rid of are sufficient recommendations to its adoption. It must also give rise to other important results—those who complain of popular clamour—of persons allying themselves with the people against the sentiments and decisions of this House, would cease to have any room for complaint. In the event of such a Reform no such clamour could exist, no such alliance could be formed; for then the sense of the people would be truly and fairly collected within these walls.

The benefits that would immediately follow the adoption of this Reform are incalculable. Though I am not one of those who would apply a sponge to the Debt of the Nation, yet am I firmly persuaded, that a reformed House of Commons would introduce such a system of economy, both in the collection and expenditure of the Public Revenue, as would give instant ease to the subject, and finally, and that at no very distant period, by a due application of national resources to national objects, *and to them alone*, free the people from that enormous load of debt and consequent taxation, under which the nation is weighed down.

Three descriptions of persons, I will admit, would have great cause to complain of this Reform: The Borough-mongers—the Lawyers—and the King's Printer. The whole of the question then is, Which is to be preferred, The interest of the whole Empire, or the interest of the Borough-mongers—the Lawyers—and the King's Printer?

At all events, I hope this consequence will follow, that after this night it will not be asserted nor insinuated, that I have any concealed purpose, that I shrink from speaking my sentiments frankly, that I decline to act an open part, or that I have any designs beyond those I avow: notwithstanding what I have urged, I beg leave to repeat, that I am open to conviction; that I am still ready to listen to all fair reasoning on the subject; that I have nothing to bias my mind; nor any other view than the public good. It will, at the same time, be naturally understood, that having devoted so much of my time and reflection to this subject of vital importance, my opinions cannot easily be shaken, nor affected by slight and common-place arguments.

I have stated fully and dispassionately, and I hope clearly and satisfactorily, to this house and to the public, the Remedy for all our Grievances, which I have been so often called upon to produce. I have obeyed that call: in that at least I hope I have given satisfaction.——The Remedy I have proposed is simple, constitutional, practicable, and safe, calculated to give satisfaction to the People, to preserve the Rights of the Crown, and to restore the balance of the Constitution. These have been the objects of my pursuit—to these have I always directed my attention—*higher I do not aspire, lower I cannot descend.* I conjure this house to consider the necessity of doing something to satisfy the rational expectations of the public, that we should not go back to our respective parts of the country in our present acknowledged contaminated condition, without holding out some reasonable hope to the country for its peace and tranquillity, that a Reform adequate to the removal of the enormous and multiplied Abuses and Corruption now known to exist, and which I contend can only be effected by a House of Commons fairly chosen by the people, will early in the next session be entertained with good faith, and taken into our most serious consideration.—— I would have the timid bear in mind who stand so much in dread of Innovation, that the simple Remedy now proposed is but a recurrence to those Laws and that Constitution, the departure from which has been the sole cause of that accumulation of evils which we now endure—that in many cases timidity is no less fatal than rashness——and "That the omission to do "what is necessary, seals a commission to "a blank of danger."—I shall now conclude with moving, "That this House will, "early in the next session of parliament, "take into consideration the necessity of "a Reform in the Representation."

On a Division, the Numbers were

For Sir Francis Burdett's Motion - - -	15
Against it - - - - - - - - - - - - - -	74
Majority against the Motion - - - - -	59

LIST OF THE MINORITY.

Adams, Charles	Maxwell, W.
Burdett, Sir Francis	Moore, Peter
Campbell, General	Thornton, Henry
Combe, Harvey	Tracey, Hanbury
Cuthbert, J. R.	Turton, Sir Thomas
Hutchinson, C.	Wardle, G. L.
Knapp, G.	Western, C. C.
Lefevre, C. S.	Wharton, John
Madocks, W. A.	

Lord Cochrane was, accidentally, out of the House at the time of the Division, and the Hon. Mr. Lyttleton paired off.

*** In a few days the above Speech will be published, by Messrs Bone and Hone, Booksellers, Strand, in the form of a Pamphlet, for the purpose of general distribution.

SUMMARY OF POLITICS.

MR. WARDLE'S PLEDGE.——This gentleman, the reader will recollect, pledged himself to show, that, by a House of Commons, *chosen by the people*, the amount of the Income Tax would be saved.——This he first stated at a Meeting at the Crown and Anchor; and, upon being reproached with it in St. Stephen's Chapel, he repeated his statement, in defiance of the threat of Mr. Tierney, who said, that, unless the statement was made good by Mr. Wardle, he would *stand convicted* in the face of the world. He does not appear to have said of *what* he would stand convicted; but, I suppose he meant of *infamy*, as in the case of the Duke of York.——Mr. Tierney and Lord Castlereagh and Mr. Canning and Mr. Perceval might think, that he really did stand convicted of infamy, in the case of the Duke; nay, Mr. Windham, who seems generously to volunteer as a forlorn hope upon all these occasions, did as good as say that this was the case, for that the taking away of MRS. CLARKE's letters was an act *worse than the worst of those imputed to the Duke of York;* and, as Mr. Wardle did take those letters away, in the manner supposed by Mr. Windham, he, of course, according to Mr. Windham's doctrine, was guilty of a crime greater than any that he alledged against the Duke, and, therefore, it was upon him that the *infamy* alighted.——This might be the opinion of Mr. Tierney and the Lords Petty and Castlereagh; of George Rose and Charles Long; of Mr. Huskisson and Mr. Ward and their two *wives*, who are pensioned upon us for life; of Mr. Canning and the *Hunns;* in short, it might be the opinion of a very great part of the honourable House; but, it was not the opinion of the nation. The nation thought quite differently. The nation thought, and were convinced, that infamy, deep and everlasting infamy, and criminality deserving of legal punishment, (which punishment they hope yet to see inflicted) attached, not to Mr. Wardle, but to those who slandered him, and who used all the means in their power to do injury to his cause, which was justly regarded as the cause of the country.——Therefore the new threat of infamy, or, of "*standing convicted,*" has not, I should suppose, much terror in it for Mr. Wardle.——The honourable House called upon him for *proof* of the truth of what he had said about the *saving of the Income tax.* His answer was, I will prove it, if you will give me the papers; if you will give me the accounts; but, without those papers, I will now, before the close of this Session, make a Statement which shall show, that I have good grounds for what I have said. The honourable House appears to have been eager to hear this statement. They did not, indeed, seem to be *over-joyed* in the same degree as when they hailed the "*tangible shape;*" but, they appeared to be *very glad;* "very "glad indeed;" and Mr. Tierney was quite witty upon the subject.——Well, this Statement, this Chapter II. of the tangible shape, was laid before the honourable House on Monday last, the 19th inst.; and, really, the honourable House did not appear to express so much satisfaction as one might have expected, especially as it was pretty evident, that even *more* than Mr. Wardle had stated might be saved, without the smallest injury to the service of the country, or the smallest diminution of the splendour and dignity of the crown. ——The Statement was very long, and embraced a great number of items of saving, some of which only I shall notice here, together with the answer of Mr. *Huskisson*, who, it seems, was the only person present thought capable of giving any answer at all. Here is another striking instance of the predominance of *mind;* for, this Mr. Huskisson, only about twelve or fourteen years ago, used to *stand with his hat off*, waiting for an answer to notes that he used to be sent with to Sir Evan Nepean. A little while before that his name cut a very respectable figure in the discussions of the famous *Clubs at Paris*, where he discovered great ability in urging the necessity of abolishing *tythes* and *funds*. Mr. Huskisson is certainly a clever man.

He has more head than all the rest put together; and, the only objection I have to him is, that he and his wife have *both fastened themselves upon us, for their lives*, to a very large amount, without my being able to discover any reason for it.——Mr. Huskisson was the person to answer Mr. Wardle; and, the selection was prudent, not only because he has more understanding as to such matters, than all the rest, but, because, by putting him forward, the rest were sure not to expose themselves.—— Mr. Huskisson began by complaining, that the general statement of Mr. Wardle had not been made in the honourable House, instead of the place where it was made; because, said he, *here* the details could have been canvassed, whereas, the consequence of making the statement "*out of doors*" (this is a very modest expression) must be to create in the public mind very improper impressions.——But, in the first place, had not Mr. Wardle as good a right to make his statement at the Crown and Anchor, as Mr. Canning had to make his statement at the London Tavern? Or, were those persons, to whom Mr. Wardle spoke, less capable of judging upon matters of *domestic œconomy*, than the crew of howling blood-suckers, by whom Mr. Canning was surrounded, and who fatten upon the miseries of war, were of judging upon matters of *foreign policy?* Or, is it to be pretended, at last, that none but the servants of the king have a right to address the people, and to communicate to them facts or opinions connected with politics?——Besides, Mr. Wardle had had the honour of making statements to the honourable House before. He had seen a good deal there already. He had seen the result of the proceedings in the case of the Duke of York. He had witnessed the vote in the case of Castlereagh and Reding, and also in the case of the three members and Mr. Quintin Dick, not forgetting the Irish revenue case. And after all this, surely he might be excused for making a statement "*out of doors.*" In doors people seemed to have become impatient; they seemed to have grown tired of statements; they pretty clearly evinced this on the morning of the ever-memorable 12th of May, when they voted 310 to 85 against Mr. Madocks's motion for Inquiry, and when there passed what will never be forgotten by those who were witnesses of it.—— Again, Mr. Wardle had been told, by the ministers, that he was not entitled to any thanks for what he had done in the case of the Duke of York. The *people* had thanked him; and, therefore, was it not natural that he should address himself to the people?——Mr. Huskisson also complained, that Mr. Wardle had made his statement *so late in the session*; and, it is well worth remarking, that he was very loudly censured for bringing forward his statement about the Duke of York so *early in the session.*——Nothing will please them. They themselves, indeed, find all times fit for their demands of money; for the loan-bills and tax-bills, and all sorts of bills tending to draw money from the people; but, if it be to inquire into how money can be saved, how public-robbery can be checked; then the *time* must be considered; there must be due notice, and plenty of time given for *preparing a defence.*——It is not my intention to enter here upon a regular series of observations on the several parts of Mr. Huskisson's speech; but, there are two or three points, which I cannot pass over.——There was one general argument of Mr. Huskisson, namely, that as long as the establishments, offices, pensions, and expences, which Mr. Wardle represented as unnecessary, *should be thought necessary by Parliament*, there could no saving take place in any of the said departments of expence; and that, if parliament should think them unnecessary, then they would not want Mr. Wardle to tell them that a great saving might be made. This is very true; but, we did not want Mr. Huskisson to tell us this: we did not want an orator or philosopher from Paris to tell us one word of it. But, Mr. Huskisson appears not to have been aware of this material point: to wit; that it was not the *opinion of Parliament*, as at present constituted, that Mr. Wardle considered as the thing to be decided by; his position being, that such and such savings would take place under the controul of a parliament, chosen in a manner *different from the parliament now in existence.* In two words, the very groundwork of his proposition is, that many of the heavy expences, which the present parliament think necessary, *are not necessary;* and, in answer to a statement so grounded, Mr. Huskisson amuses us with saying, that as long as the parliament shall think the expenditure necessary, the proposed saving cannot be made.——Mr. Wardle may, for instance, and doubtless will, when he comes to his detail, say, "strike off this great pension to Mrs. Emily "Huskisson; and this to Mrs. Rosalie (or "some such name) Ward," And, will his

being told that the parliament *thinks these pensions necessary* be regarded as an *answer* to him? When he shall, as he doubtless will, call for the abolition of the pension of 500*l.* a year to *Mary and Maria* HUNN, the half-sisters, I believe, of Mr. Canning, is he to be told, that this saving cannot be made, *because the parliament thinks it right not to make it?* He may; but this is the very thing he is about to bring before the public. He says, he is about to shew, that there are Eleven Millions a year that might be saved, and which the present parliament *do not think it right to save.* This is is the very thing. It is, therefore, a downright absurdity to attempt to shut his mouth by saying, that such and such savings cannot be made, *while the parliament chooses to continue the expences.* Give us a parliament, says he, freely chosen by the people, and in which there shall be no trafficking in Seats, and then, I engage, that eleven millions of taxes will be saved; and here are the items upon which they would make the saving. Oh, no! say his opponents, the parliament could not make any such saving, as long as the parliament should think the present expences necessary. Why, this is downright nonsense. It is as naked a *parler-pour-parler* as ever was heard in the world.——This, however, was the general answer. Mr. Wardle represented the *German troops* unnecessary, and said the expence of them might be saved; but he was answered by being told, *that the parliament thought them necessary.* Upon the subject of the *Cavalry*, however, Mr. Huskisson attempted to give, and did really give, something of *a reason.* He said, they were useful as *composing part of the* POLICE. This was being very frank, indeed. It, in part, at least, answers a question that I have so often put: "*what* "is all this monstrous standing army *for?*" Here is one of the purposes, at any rate. I hope, we shall bear this declaration in mind; that, we are to consider the cavalry as useful in the way of *police!* Very good: only, let us be sure not to forget it.—— Mr. Wardle stated the expence of collecting the taxes at 2,800,000*l.* which Mr. Huskisson said was correct; but Mr. Wardle overlooked the expence of the *military* and *naval* force kept up for the purpose of securing this collection, together with the great sums received by several persons, connected with the tax-gathering, and not paid at the several tax-offices, but whose salaries or allowances fall under other heads. I should like to know, what is paid annually, out of the taxes, for *law.* I should not wonder if the revenue alone maintained three hundred lawyers of all sorts and sizes. No wonder that the bar is dumb, when the rights of the people are to be asserted.——Mr. Huskisson concluded with a very moving piece of eloquence. "He contrasted the *mild* and *impartial* "mode, in which the public taxes were "collected *here*, with the *violent* manner, "in which they were levied in France, "where they were exacted by the *bayonet*, "and where, if an *unfortunate* man was in "arrear, soldiers were placed in his house, "living at free quarter until the amount "was paid."——This is the only interesting part of Mr. Huskisson's speech, except what related to the *cavalry* and the *police.* ——I should, first, be inclined to doubt the *fact* about the mode of enforcing payment of taxes in France, had it not been stated by a member of the honourable House. Indeed, had it not been stated upon such authority, I should have set it down for a pure invention; for one of those worthy old Anti-jacobin devices, by the means of which the people of this country were, by John Bowles and his associates, so long affrighted and kept in subjection. But, after all, what is there in this contrast between the *English* and the *French* mode of collecting taxes? I do not wish to palliate the tyranny of the Emperor Napoleon; but, since Mr. Huskisson has thought proper to answer Mr. Wardle by reminding him of the manner in which taxes are collected in France; since we are, by means like these, to be scared from our desire to see eleven millions saved, though it is not easy to perceive how any man in his senses is to be scared by such means; since we are to have this sort of answer, let us, taking Mr. Huskisson's facts for granted; aye, let us even go so far as to take his facts for granted about the collection of the revenue in France, and see what there is of solid *distinction* in the contrast which he attempted to draw. ——A man in France, who is so *unfortunate* as to fall in arrear in the payment of his taxes, has soldiers placed in his house to live at free-quarter, *till he does pay them.* Oh, then, he *can* pay them, and therefore has it in his power to prevent the soldiers coming into his house? No, perhaps not. Well, then, the soldiers stay in his house, till they have eaten and drunk all that is eatable or drinkable in the house. ——This is bad enough; and now let us see how they are collected in *England.* As long as the Englishman pays *without any resistance or refusal*, there is to be sure, no

violence; and this, I take it, is the case in France. I not only take it to be so, but I know that it must be so; and really, I am far from thinking the worse of the people of France for their rendering a *violent* manner necessary in the collecting of taxes *imposed without their consent*. It shews, that the people of France have courage in civil as well as in military matters, and that they are not to be so easily cheated by Buonapartés' sham Legislative Body, called together by his sham elections. If this picture be real; if we have not to ascribe it, in some degree, to a sneaking kindness which Mr. Huskisson still retains for his old friends, the good patriots of France, who disliked funds and tythes, and to his virtuous abhorrence of despotism: if the picture be real, Mr. Huskisson has told me the best news that I have heard for some time. I was afraid, that the people of France, amused by the name of *elections*, were content under the robberies, which (as we have been *told*) were daily committed upon them in virtue of *edicts*, or *decrees* or *senatus-consultums*, or other abominable acts, of no matter what name, issued by an assembly, who have no power or voice any more than so many barber's blocks, who come and go, who speak and hold their tongues, who say OUI and NON just as they are commanded by the Emperor's official Orator, from whom, in one shape or another, the wretches receive their dirty hire, though, at the same time, they swagger about and would fain pass for gentlemen, and talk of their *honour* and *dignity* in a strain that ought, one would think, to purchase them a kicking at every corner of the streets of Paris. I really was afraid, that the people of France had so long and so patiently listened to the gabble and bombast of these fellows about *la loi* and *la constitution*, that they had, at last, became completely duped; or had been so cowed down by the great number of soldiers in that military government, that they had lost all sense of injury, and all desire of obtaining justice. But, if Mr. Huskisson be correctly informed, and I dare say he is, the people of France act in a way that compels their tyrants to have recourse to "*violent means*," in order to wring their earnings from them. This is a good hearing; because where violence is resorted to in order to collect taxes, there must be resistance, or at least, refusal, on the part of those of whom the said taxes are demanded.——Begging the reader's pardon for this digression, I now return to the English mode of enforcing the payment of taxes, and which mode Mr. Huskisson contrasted with the *bayonet* and *free-quarter* mode adopted in France. As long as we pay *without resistance* and *without refusal*, we are, as I said before, quite secure against violence of any sort; but so I take it for granted, they are in France; for, even highwaymen and housebreakers would invariably content themselves with taking from their subjects their goods and money, were it not, that now and then a murder is necessary to their own safety, which is not the case with tax-collectors, either in France or any where else. Well, then, in what does this "*contrast*" consist? What is there of *solid distinction* in it? Why, in France, if a man is, *unfortunately, in arrear*, that is to say, if he *do not pay the taxes demanded of him*, then, in that case, soldiers are sent to live upon him at free-quarter. Now, either he *can* pay, or he *cannot*. If the former, he has the power of keeping away the soldiers, and is not the *unfortunate* man, that Mr. Huskisson, in his humanity, seems to suppose. If the latter, that is to say, if he be *unable* to pay, is it not rather odd, that his house should be selected for *free quarter*, which always implies tolerable *good cheer*. It really is; you must excuse me, Mr. Huskisson; but I must say, that it is an odd thing, that a man who has the means of paying his taxes should unfortunately fall in arrear; or, that a man who has not the means of paying them, should be able to keep soldiers at free-quarter.——But, to return once more to the English mode of enforcing the payment of taxes, what is done, if a man *refuse* to pay? No matter upon what ground, whether upon *disinclination* or *disability*. It is all the same; and what is done? The *bayonet* is not sent. No, that it is not, unless you were to attempt to repel force by force, and were successfully to resist the sheriff's officers. Well; but how do we go on? Why, after a demand of the tax, a seizure is made upon the goods, buildings, lands, and in some cases, upon the body, of the man who cannot, or who does not, pay. In short, all his property is taken away from him, and he is, at last, left to begin the world a-new in rags. Now, Mr. Huskisson, what could the *bayonet* do more than this? Will you be so good as to tell me what it could do more? But, you will say, perhaps, that the bayonet is not used, at any rate; and that the bayonet is a ghastly looking thing. Very true; but, again I tell you, that, it is not used, because there is *no resistance*; that is

to say, because there is *no occasion for the bayonet*; that is to say, because those who *unfortunately* fall in arrear, can have all their property taken from them, and can be completely ruined, without the assistance of the bayonet.——Now, mind, *I do not find fault with this.* I know that there must be, *somewhere*, a force, at last, to compel some men to pay taxes; but, what I have said, will, I think, tend to make you a little cautious how you amuse yourself with drawing contrasts between the people of France and those of England upon the score of taxation. What you have said, admitting it to be true, about the use of violent means for the purpose of collecting the taxes in France, is really a great compliment to the people, and no small one to the government. The means would not be used, if the taxes could be collected without them; and the government not being able to collect taxes without the use of violent means, shows, and clearly proves, that the people of France are not so cowed down, are not such submissive creatures, are not such abject slaves, are not such degraded wretches, as quietly to give up their property piece-meal to a set of cowardly cheaters, who, surrounded with their Mamelukes, or other foreign mercenaries, would insult and rob the people "*au nom de la loi*," dividing the plunder amongst themselves and their hungry relations.——Mr. Huskisson has seduced me into a digression, which has left me no time for any further remarks at present. This is, however, a subject to which I shall return again and again. As soon as I obtain a *full* and *correct* report of Mr. Wardle's Speech, I will publish it in the same way that I have the Speeches of the Speaker and of sir Francis Burdett.

Essex Meeting.—Two articles signed by many respectable gentlemen of Essex, (which shall be in my next) will shew what means have been used in that county to stifle the public voice.——I can, at present, only call the reader's attention to them. I shall not fail to give an account of the Meeting, when it has taken place.

Botley, 22 June, 1809.

N. B. The debts of Miss Taylor have all been *paid*, and likewise those of her mother, or, at least, these latter have been settled, I believe, to the satisfaction of the creditors.——A *list* of the Subscribers is now preparing, and, in a fortnight, I hope to be able to lay before the public a statement of the whole business.——It is totally false, that any *quarrel* has taken place between Miss Taylor and any of the persons who have had the management of the Subscription.

☞ The Public Robbers, by which phrase I do not, of course, mean the ministers and their underlings, as some of the news-paper people seem to imagine, but those who have really robbed the public in with-holding 22 documents out of 27; these public robbers deny most positively, that I was the author of the little pamphlet, which the Addington ministry sent to all the Churches in the kingdom, and which, I am told, Mr. Poulter, like his neighbouring parsons, read instead of *a sermon*; the robbers deny that I was the author of that pamphlet; but, what will not those say, who after getting documents out of the War-office, could suppress 22 of them out of 27?—The next time I meet Mr. Poulter at Winchester, however, I will show him, and the other Winchester parsons, some documents that they will little expect to see; and, I think, I can lay my hand upon the original of the *Circular Letter to the Ministers of the Parishes*, which was written by me, and in which there was a phrase or two interlined *in the handwriting of Mr. Addington*. The next time I meet Mr. Poulter at Winchester, I will put him and some of his brethren in mind of an anecdote or two, which they appear to have forgotten, but which I have not forgotten.

SPANISH SHEEP.

Several noblemen and gentlemen have written to me, upon the subject of *Sheep*, which they have, it appears, been informed, are coming from Spain, and are to be placed under *my care;* and, as it may possibly be of public interest and utility, I shall here state what will, I hope, be considered as a sufficient answer to all those who have honoured me with applications upon the subject.—I am not *certain*, that any sheep will be sent to my care; but, I have good reason to suppose, that *several thousands* of the very finest sheep in Spain will be sent to England, and that I, without any *property* in them whatever, but out of friendship for the owner, shall have, in a great degree, the care and management of them, unless he himself should arrive in England time enough to take the care upon himself.—If the flock, or any part of it, should be *sold* under my direction and controul, the sale will certainly

be *by auction*; and, I beg leave to observe, by way of saving the trouble of applications for *preferences*, that *no part of the property will be mine*, and that, of course, I shall not be able, unless the owner be arrived, to give the smallest preference to any one.—When the sheep arrive (if they do arrive), it is my intention to give due notice thereof, to every part of the kingdom; that is to say, if intended for sale. If the number should be small, I shall keep them in the neighbourhood of Botley; but, if it amount to some *thousands*, and if a sale were to be made, the place of sale would, I imagine, be somewhere near Winchester.—It is expected that the sheep will be landed at Portsmouth; and, a letter, which I have received from SIR JOHN SINCLAIR, as President of the Board of Agriculture, informs me, that, in consequence of an application from him, the Treasury has given orders to the Commissioners of Customs, at the Out-ports, and also to the Transport Board, to afford every facility to the safe and quick landing of the sheep. The season of the year is rather unfavourable. The heat, and the scarcity of water, on board of ship, will, I am afraid, prove fatal to a part, at least, of the flock; but, at any rate, it is of great importance, that there should be no delay in the landing; and, to prevent this, the Treasury appears to have taken the necessary precaution. I have provided as much, and, perhaps, more, pasture, than will be necessary; but, it is possible, that I may not have provided half enough. I therefore take this opportunity of requesting any gentlemen, who may be able to accommodate me with good wholesome pasture, for a month or two, to be so good as to write to me upon the subject. And also to let me know, if they can *lend* me shepherds for a little while, in case I should be at a loss for such assistance. It is a *public* concern; and, I trust, the friends of agriculture, in the neighbouring counties as well as in this, will gladly afford me all the aid in their power. Any where between SOBERTON across to WINCHESTER, and on towards Stockbridge or Sutton; in short, any where within twenty miles of Botley, where there is good and wholesome sheep feed, may do for the purpose.—I should, of course, divide the flock, if numerous, in order to apportion the number of mouths to the quantity of food.—I take this opportunity of apologizing to those gentlemen, who have written to me upon this subject, and whom I have not answered. It is quite impossible for me to answer all, or even half; and, therefore, I trust, that my silence will not, by any one, be attributed to any want of respect for him, or of disposition to give his letter an immediate answer.

WM. COBBETT.

OFFICIAL PAPERS.

FRENCH ARMY IN AUSTRIA.—*Twelfth Bulletin; Battle of Urfar.* *(Continued from p. 960.)*

At the same moment the marshal prince of Ponte Corvo came to Lintz with the cavalry and the first brigade of Saxon infantry, gen. Vandamme, at the head of the Wirtemberg troops, and four squadrons of Saxon hussars and dragoons, repulsed the two first columns of the enemy, drove them from their position, took from them six pieces of artillery, made 400 prisoners, and threw them into confusion. The third column of the enemy appeared on the heights of Berslingbergh at seven in the evening, and his infantry in a moment took possession of the neighbouring mountains.—The Saxon infantry fell on the enemy with fury, drove him from his position, and took 300 prisoners, and several ammunition waggons. —The enemy has retired in confusion to Freystadt and Haslach. The hussars sent out in pursuit brought in 500 horse, and muskets, and a number of waggons and caissons were found in the woods. The loss of the enemy amounts to 2,000 in killed and wounded, besides prisoners. Our whole loss in killed, wounded, and prisoners, is not 400.

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